

Christians trying to make a difference in her church and her community).

Jehnel enjoys working and making a difference in the lives of young people. She believes that it is important to bridge the gap between the youth and the older members of the church.

Jehnel's favorite scripture is "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". (Philippians 4:13)

Jehnel believes that whatever God has for her is for her, so she does not worry about people and circumstances. Jehnel just continues to trust in God.

Mr. Speaker, Jehnel Denise Bannister is a young woman of faith who is committed to her church and her community. As such, I believe that she is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly spiritual woman.

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH R. KNOX OF
GRAND TRUNK WESTERN RAIL-
ROAD AND CANADIAN NATIONAL
RAILWAYS

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Mr. Kenneth R. Knox upon his retirement from the rail industry after 36 years of service to the Grand Trunk Western Railroad and Canadian National Railways. It is truly an honor to thank Mr. Knox for 36 years of hard work and devotion to the railroad industry.

Beginning his career in the railroad industry as a Yard Helper with Grand Trunk Western Railroad in 1965, Mr. Knox immediately began rising up the ladder because of his well-founded knowledge and expertise. Ever misunderstood, the rail industry in the United States is one of the most important vehicles of U.S. commerce and is the remaining connection between our glorious industrial age past and the future of industry in America. Our railways are a symbol of American freedom and prosperity to the hard-working women and men that staff and service this important part of American society.

During his time in the railroad industry, Mr. Knox served also as Yardmaster, Assistant Trainmaster, Trainmaster, Terminal Manager, District Manager, Superintendent Agreement Administration, Manager of Labor Relations, up to his service as Manager of Operations for the Crew Management Center/Rail Traffic Control. Always dedicated to his job, Mr. Knox is well-liked and respected among all segments of the rail industry, especially by co-workers, upon his retirement he will be missed not only because his friendship with fellow workers, but also because of the knowledge and expertise he brings to work with him every day. His colleagues and I must truly respect the imprint he has left behind.

In addition to his dedication to the railroad industry, his dedication to family and friends and religion is second to none. I wish to thank Mr. Kenneth Knox for his 36 years of toil and sweat in the rail industry, and I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing Mr. Knox a happy and healthy retirement.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMENDING THE CONTRIBUTION
OF WESTFIELD WORKS WONDERS

HON. JAMES H. MALONEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to bring to the attention of the House of Representatives and the American people an event that will raise money for schools, hospitals and charities in Connecticut. The Westfield Works Wonders charity event took place on November 18, 2001 with the goal of raising \$400,000.

This annual event has raised over \$1.2 million since its inception four years ago. An event of this magnitude is possible through the cooperation of the four Westfield Shoppingtowns in Enfield, Meriden, Trumbull and Milford. These malls join forces for the event by extending their hours of operation and donating their workforce.

I would like to commend the thousands of workers, volunteers and hundreds of non-profit organizations who serve their community through this event. This event embodies the spirit of community that will see our Nation through this troubling time.

On behalf of the people of Connecticut's 5th District, I congratulate and thank all of the citizens who participate in the Westfield Works Wonders event for the wonderful contributions they have made to our community and country.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3447, the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001. This important legislation makes changes to and additions of several important health benefits for our Nation's veterans.

I would like to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Mr. SMITH and Mr. EVANS, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Health Subcommittee Mr. MORAN and Mr. FILNER, and my colleagues on the Committee for their work on this bill.

Although there are several important health benefit enhancements in this bill, I would like to speak specifically about the provisions regarding VA nurse retention and recruitment, which are taken from a bill that Representatives SUE KELLY, CAROLYN MCCARTHY, MIKE DOYLE, and I introduced on October 3, 2001.

The legislation we introduced, H.R. 3017 the Department of Veterans Affairs Nurse Recruitment and Retention Enhancement Act of 2001, is companion legislation to S. 1188, which was introduced by Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER on July 17, 2001.

S. 1188, H.R. 3017, and now the provisions in H.R. 3347 seek to address the current nurs-

ing shortage in the VA health care system, and to ensure that the shortage is not exacerbated.

The provisions in H.R. 3347 modify existing scholarship and debt reduction programs for VA nurses, requires the VA to establish staffing standards at VA health care facilities, makes pay more consistent for various VA health professionals, and rectifies unequal retirement policies to improve retention of nurses in the VA health care system.

This legislation also requires the VA to report to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs regarding VA nursing issues, including the use of overtime by licensed nursing staff and nursing assistants in each facility in order to help determine what can be done to reduce the amount of mandatory overtime.

This legislation is a critical step in addressing the nursing shortage in the VA health care system. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3347 and support our VA nurses and health care system, as well as the men and women who have fought for our country and now receive care at these facilities.

TRIBUTE TO CENTRAL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize, and offer my congratulations to, Central Elementary School, located in Paintsville, Kentucky. Earlier this year, students from Central Elementary participated in the national We the People * * * Project Citizen competition in San Antonio, Texas and were awarded honorable mention for their project, Speed Limit Signs. I was very gratified to learn of this and want to take this time to congratulate the teachers and students of Central Elementary affiliated with this program.

They are: Paula Goss, Annette Rouse, Brooke Bergeron, Katie Borders, Kalylia Brachett, Chelsea Burchett, Kelsea Castle, Shaina Kestner, Matthew Oney, Zac Sergent, Brittany Skaggs, Jasmine Watson, Chelsea Webb, and David Zitzelberger.

Project Citizen is a valuable program and I support it. Administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded through the Department of Education, Project Citizen is designed to engage public school students and their teachers and parents in important public policy issues. During competitions, students select an issue, study its affect on local communities, and share their findings. Schools invited to participate at the national conference won their state competitions.

Mr. Speaker, civic education and participation in the democratic process is vital to the stability of our Nation, and we must encourage people of all age groups, especially young students, to assume a role in local, state, and federal affairs. We the People * * * Project Citizen fosters this, and I hope the more schools will decide to participate in this program. Again, I want to congratulate the students and teachers of Central Elementary.